

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-127. (Canceled)

128. (Currently Amended) A device for providing additional stabilization to tissue already in contact with a primary stabilization member, said device comprising:

a single, substantially rigid, tissue contact member formed in a unitary, continuous loop and adapted to be placed on the tissue in an area bounded by primary tissue contact members, wherein a bottom surface of said contact member includes a contact surface that declines angularly in a radial direction from a periphery of said loop toward an opening in the middle of said loop, such that said bottom surface is angled in opposite directions on opposite sides of said opening;

a connecting member extending from said at least one tissue contact member and adapted to be hand held or fixed to a relatively immovable object; and

a lumen in fluid communication with said contact member.

129. (Original) The device of claim 128, wherein said at least one tissue contact member comprises a base member having a central opening therethrough, said central opening adapted to allow access to a target site on the tissue.

130. (Original) The device of claim 129, wherein said base member is substantially oval-shaped.

131. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 130, wherein said oval-shaped member cants upwardly around an outer perimeter thereof.

132. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 129, wherein said base member has a substantially hollow interior adapted to develop a negative pressure therein, and said lumen is in fluid communication with said base member.

133. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 132, wherein said lumen extends through at least a portion of said connecting member.

134. (Original) The device of claim 132, wherein said base member further comprises openings through a bottom surface thereof, said openings being fluidly connected with said substantially hollow interior and adapted to apply a negative pressure to the tissue.

135. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 134, wherein said base member further comprises openings through an upper surface thereof, said openings through said upper surface being fluidly connected with a second lumen that is connectable with a source of pressure that is independent of a pressure in said substantially hollow interior of said base member.

136. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 135, wherein said second lumen runs inside of said connecting member.

137. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 135 further comprising a manifold mounted inside said base member and fluidly connecting said second lumen with said openings through said upper surface.

Claims 138-144. (Canceled)

145. (Previously Presented) A device for providing additional stabilization to tissue already in contact with a primary stabilization member, said device comprising:

at least one tissue contact member adapted to be placed on the tissue in an area bounded by primary tissue contact members, wherein said at least one tissue contact member comprises a substantially oval-shaped base member having a central opening therethrough, said central opening adapted to allow access to a target site on the tissue, and wherein said substantially oval-shaped base member has a contact surface that is a bottom surface of said contact member and cants upwardly around an outer perimeter thereof, in a direction from an inner portion of said contact member toward said outer perimeter, and wherein said substantially oval-shaped base member has a second opening through at least a portion thereof, said second opening being located peripherally of said central opening; and

a connecting member extending from said at least one tissue contact member and adapted to be hand held or fixed to a relatively immovable object.

146. (Previously Presented) A device for providing additional stabilization to tissue already in contact with a primary stabilization member, said device comprising:

at least one tissue contact member adapted to be placed on the tissue in an area bounded by primary tissue contact members, wherein said at least one tissue contact member comprises a base member having a central opening therethrough, said central opening adapted to allow access to a target site on the tissue, said base member further having a substantially hollow interior adapted to develop a negative pressure therein, wherein said base member further comprises openings through a bottom surface thereof, said openings being fluidly connected with said substantially hollow interior and adapted to apply a negative pressure to the tissue, and openings through an upper surface thereof, said openings through said upper surface being fluidly connected with a lumen that is connectable with a source of pressure that is independent of a pressure in said substantially hollow interior of said base member, wherein said bottom surface comprises a contact surface that forms at least a part of said bottom surface and inclines upwardly in a direction from an inner portion of said bottom surface towards an outer perimeter of said bottom surface; and

a connecting member extending from said at least one tissue contact member and adapted to be hand held or fixed to a relatively immovable object.

147. (Currently Amended) A device for providing additional stabilization to tissue already in contact with a primary stabilization member, said device comprising:

at least one tissue contact member adapted to be placed on the tissue in an area bounded by primary tissue contact members, said at least one tissue contact member comprising a base member having a central opening therethrough, said central opening adapted to allow access to a target site on the tissue, said base member further having an outer perimeter portion that cants upwardly from a bottom surface of said base member located interiorly of said outer perimeter portion, so that said bottom surface located interiorly contacts the tissue while said outer perimeter portion of said bottom surface contacts the primary stabilization member, and wherein said bottom surface on one side of said central opening is angled downwardly in a first direction from said outer perimeter portion to said central opening, and said bottom surface on an opposite side of said one side is angled downwardly in a second direction from said outer perimeter portion to said central opening;

a second opening through a portion of said contact member that is not on said bottom surface, said second opening configured to deliver positive pressure therethrough; and

a connecting member extending from said at least one tissue contact member and adapted to be

hand held or fixed to a relatively immovable object.

148. (Previously Presented) A device for providing additional stabilization to tissue already in contact with a primary stabilization member, said device comprising:

a single, substantially rigid, tissue contact member formed in a continuous loop and adapted to be placed on the tissue in an area bounded by primary tissue contact members, said single, substantially rigid, tissue contact member including a contact bottom surface that angles from an exterior bottom portion thereof to an interior bottom portion thereof, whereby said interior portion of said contact bottom surface is configured to approximate tissue while allowing said exterior bottom portion to contact upper surfaces of said primary stabilization member;

an opening through a surface of said tissue contact member, said opening in fluid communication with a lumen; and

a connecting member integrally formed with and extending from said at least one tissue contact member and adapted to be hand held or fixed to a relatively immovable object.

149. (Currently Amended) A device for providing additional stabilization to tissue already in contact with a primary stabilization member, said device comprising:

a single, substantially rigid, tissue contact member formed in a continuous loop and adapted to be placed on the tissue in an area bounded by primary tissue contact members, wherein said at least one tissue contact member comprises a base member having a central opening therethrough, said central opening adapted to allow access to a target site on the tissue, and wherein said base member is substantially oval-shaped and has a contact bottom surface that cants upwardly in opposite directions on opposite sides of said central opening, from an interior portion thereof to an outer perimeter thereof;

at least one second opening through said base member; said at least one second opening configured to deliver positive or negative pressure through said base member; and

a connecting member extending from said at least one tissue contact member and adapted to be hand held or fixed to a relatively immovable object.

150. (Currently Amended) A device for providing additional stabilization to tissue already in contact with a primary stabilization member, said device comprising:

a single, substantially rigid, tissue contact member formed in a unitary, continuous loop and adapted to be placed on the tissue in an area bounded by primary tissue contact members, wherein said

at least one tissue contact member comprises a base member having a central opening therethrough, said central opening adapted to allow access to a target site on the tissue, wherein said base member has a substantially hollow interior adapted to develop a negative pressure therein, wherein said base member further comprises openings through a bottom surface thereof, said bottom surface inclined upwardly in opposite directions on opposite sides of said central opening, along a direction from an interior perimeter thereof to an exterior perimeter thereof, said openings being fluidly connected with said substantially hollow interior and adapted to apply a negative pressure to the tissue, and wherein said base member further comprises openings through an upper surface thereof, said openings through said upper surface being fluidly connected with a lumen that is connectable with a source of pressure that is independent of a pressure in said substantially hollow interior of said base member; and

a connecting member extending from said at least one tissue contact member and adapted to be hand held or fixed to a relatively immovable object.